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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
November 20, 2009

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November 19

09:25 Handed a letter of appointment to Erikawa as president of the National Personnel Authority at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei). Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano and Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretaries Matsuno and Matsui were also present. Hirano stayed behind.

10:26 Met Advisor Nakayama.

11:11 Met Matsui, followed by former Economist editor-in-chief Bill Emmott.

13:31 Met Environment Minister Ozawa and Matsuno.

13:59 Met Cabinet Office Senior Vice-Minister Furukawa and Government Revitalization Unit Secretary General Hideki Kato.

14:31 Met Foreign Minister Okada and Defense Minister Kitazawa.

16:05 Met Nippon Professional Baseball Commissioner Ryozi Kato, All Japan University Baseball Federation Vice President Akira Nanbara, and Secretary General Masayuki Naito.

17:3 Met UN High Commissioner for Refugees Guterres.

18:01 Attended a Government Revitalization Unit meeting.

19:06 Met National Strategy Minister Kan.

21:18 Attended a Lower House plenary session.

23:43 Met DPJ Secretary General Ozawa, Lower House Rules and Administration Committee Chairman Matsumoto, and others in the Diet building.

November 20

0:12 Attended the Lower House plenary session.

4) Prime Minister Hatoyama: "I will formulate a plan" for Futenma relocation

NIKKEI (Page 20) (Full)
November 20, 2009

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama met on Nov. 19 with Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (the Kantei). Referring to the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa Prefecture, the prime minister during the meeting once again indicated his intention to make a final decision, saying, "I will formulate a plan."

5) Foreign Minister Okada implies possible acceptance of existing Futenma relocation plan

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Full)
November 20, 2009

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada discussed the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan City, Okinawa) at the House of Councillors Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense on Nov. 19. He said: "Theoretically, all options are possible," indicating for the first time his possible acceptance of the current plan to relocate Futenma to the coastal area of Camp Schwab (in Nago City). Okada had so far limited himself to hinting at such a

possibility, saying that the existing plan "will be acceptable if a reexamination (of the policymaking process) shows that it is reasonable," since he has been looking at the option of merging Futenma with Kadena Air Base (located in the towns of Kadena and Chatan and Okinawa City).

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Meanwhile, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama discussed proposals to revise the existing plan, including new measures to reduce the burden on Okinawa, with Okada and Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) on Nov. 19. Hatoyama said: "I will formulate a plan," stressing that he will be the one to make the final decision.

He also told reporters at the Kantei on the early evening of the same day: "We are in the process of examining various options. There is also the Japan-U.S. agreement," indicating that the existing plan is not being ruled out as an option.

6) Current plan for Futenma relocation moving forward quickly in the government; PM Hatoyama still cautious

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
November 20, 2009

Moves in the government to work for settling the question of the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa under the current plan to relocate the base to the coastal area of Camp Schwab have accelerated. However, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama still maintains a cautious attitude.

Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa went to the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) with Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada on Nov. 19 to brief Hatoyama on the proposals of the Ministry of Defense (MOD), including measures to reduce the burden on Okinawa, premised on the existing relocation plan. These proposals include frontloading the relocation of 8,000 U.S. Marines to Guam, the return of some U.S. military facilities south of Kadena Air Base (KAB) ahead of schedule, and moving more exercises on the KAB elsewhere. A senior MOD official says: "While there are no surprises, these proposals demonstrate good faith."

U.S. budget allocations for the relocation of the Marines to Guam will be finalized in mid-December, while Japan's FY2010 budget bills will also be formulated in mid-December. If a conclusion is deferred to next year, it will not be possible to obtain the related funding in both countries, which will make it difficult to implement the existing plan. Moreover, a mayoral election is taking place in Nago City - the proposed Futenma relocation site - in January. It is believed that the closer it gets to the mayoral race, in which Futenma relocation is bound to be the main issue, the more difficult it will become for the government to reach a conclusion. Therefore, it is generally thought in the government that the time limit for settling this issue under the existing plan is "before the end of the year."

However, Hatoyama's real intent remains unclear.

At his meeting with Kitazawa and Okada, Hatoyama praised the MOD proposals, saying: "You have drawn up good proposals." A visit to Okinawa by Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano is also being planned. The Hatoyama cabinet's e-mail magazine on Nov. 19 relates that at the recent Japan-U.S. summit meeting with President Barack Obama, Hatoyama told the President: "Please trust me" and the President responded with: "Absolutely, I trust you," thus playing up the relationship of trust between the two leaders. However, the Prime Minister's aides claim that this exchange "did not amount to any promise." In this e-mail magazine, Hatoyama merely talks about a "good result for both sides."

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7) Defense Ministry proposes mitigating local base-hosting burden

over Futenma relocation

ASAHI (Page 12) (Full)
Eve., November 19, 2009

The Defense Ministry has modified the current plan to relocate the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, to the Henoko area of the island prefecture's northern coastal city of Nago and submitted the modified plan to the prime minister's office and the Foreign Ministry. The modified plan incorporates measures to mitigate Okinawa's base-hosting burden, including those for reducing the noise of aircraft deployed to the U.S. Kadena Air Base. This plan, if approved by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, will be presented to U.S. officials in a meeting of the Japanese and U.S. governments' working group.

The modified plan is aimed at obtaining Okinawa's understanding by drawing further burden-lessening concessions from the U.S. government and softening Okinawa Prefecture's local opposition to the planned relocation of Futenma airfield to Henoko.

The new plan features relocating Kadena-based aircraft's training outside Okinawa Prefecture or reducing such training and lessening aircraft noise by constraining night flights. The Defense Ministry will also propose stipulating environment-oriented measures that allow local officials to enter U.S. military bases for on-site inspections if and when environmental contamination occurs there and that requires the U.S. military to restore the contaminated sites of bases to their original state. In addition, the new plan also proposes requesting the U.S. government to move up a portion of the current "roadmap" for the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan. Specifically, the ministry plans to press the U.S. government to return the sites of U.S. military bases located south of the Kadena base.

8) Futenma working group to document agreement under four ministers' names

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Full)
November 20, 2009

A ministerial-level working group of the Japanese and U.S. governments over the pending issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, has confirmed that the two governments will conclude an agreement in writing by the end of the year under the names of the foreign and defense ministers and the U.S. state and defense secretaries, sources said yesterday. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama clarified yesterday that he will submit to the working group his own idea on behalf of the Japanese government. The working group's conclusion is expected to constitute a new de facto intergovernmental agreement between Japan and the United States.

Hatoyama has already expressed his intention of accepting the working group's conclusion as "a decision with the most weight." Meanwhile, the U.S. government has called for the Japanese government to carry out the current plan to relocate Futenma airfield to a coastal area of Camp Schwab in the Henoko area of Okinawa Prefecture's northern coastal city of Nago, and he has

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rejected Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada's advocacy of integrating the heliport functions of Futenma airfield into the U.S. Kadena Air Base.

The documentation of agreement is therefore expected to incorporate the working group's approval of the current plan for Futenma relocation to Henoko and to reject Futenma's merger with Kadena. "Logically, the agreement between Japan and the United States (on the current plan) is also an option," Hatoyama told reporters at his office. "I'm now looking into the various options," he added. In this connection, Hatoyama met yesterday at his office with Okada and Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa. In this meeting, Kitazawa explained his ministry's plan to mitigate Okinawa Prefecture's base-hosting burden, based on the current plan. Hatoyama clarified

there he will work out his idea on the government's behalf. "I will make a plan," he told them.

9) Hiranuma remains cautious about Kamei's call to launch a new party

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
November 20, 2009

People's New Party (PNP) Representative Shizuka Kamei, who is also minister for financial affairs, held talks with former Economy, Trade, and Industry Minister Takeo Hiranuma, an independent, in the Diet building yesterday. In the session, Kamei sounded out Hiranuma on the idea of launching a new party by the PNP, the New Party Nippon, and the Hiranuma group. Kamei said to Hiranuma, "Let's work together again." In response, Hiranuma expressed his desire to discuss the matter in his group, saying, "I can't give you an answer right now."

10) Ruling parties ram business debt bill through Diet

ASAHI (Top Play) (Lead paragraph)
November 20, 2009

In a House of Representatives plenary session before dawn today, a bill to encourage lenders to freeze debt repayments for small and mid-size companies was approved by a majority from the Democratic Party of Japan, the Social Democratic Party, the People's New Party, and the Japanese Communist Party. The bill was sent on to the House of Councillors. The Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito boycotted the vote on the bill taken at the plenary session. The ruling parties are poised to take votes on all the remaining cabinet-submitted bills in a Lower House session today. Backlash from the opposition camp is expected to further intensify.

11) Government to crackdown on vicious cases of forcing foreign trainees to work under bad conditions

NIKKEI (Page 38) (Full)
November 20, 2009

The government yesterday drafted a new action plan to prevent and eradicate human trafficking - the trade in people with the aim of coercing them into prostitution or labor. The draft categorizes vicious cases in which brokers force foreigners who came to Japan under training programs to work under bad conditions as human trafficking. It includes measures to tighten regulations to crackdown on such cases.

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The draft also calls for strengthened cooperation between the police, immigration offices, and labor standards inspection offices. Officials will crackdown on and prosecute brokers who are forcing foreign trainees to work under harsh conditions at low wages after confiscating their passports. Officials will conduct on-the-spot inspections.

The current action plan on human trafficking, worked out in 2004, was intended to protect foreign women who are forced to engage in prostitution. Consultation offices for women have provided protection and support for victims. In discussing measures to tighten regulations on illegal workers, the government will also map out measures to protect male victims.

The draft action plan will be posted on the Cabinet Secretariat's website. The government will solicit public opinion until Dec. 3 and then finalize the plan in a meeting of the ministerial-level crime countermeasures conference to be held next month.

12) LDP to field young former ASDF member for Upper House proportional representation section

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
November 20, 2009

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) decided yesterday to field Takashi Uto, 35, a former Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) member, for the proportional representation section of the House of Councillors election next summer. Uto will be the second former SDF officer to be fielded by the LDP following Masahisa Sato, a former Ground Self-Defense Force col., who won a Diet seat in the 2007 Upper House election. Uto has entered the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management after serving at the ASDF for nine years. It is rare for the LDP to field an unknown young person connected with the Defense Ministry/SDF. The party plans to officially endorse him as part of the second round, along with one member each from the Nursing Federation and the National Land Improvement Political Federation.

13) Obama said, "I trust you," during Japan-U.S. summit, according to Prime Minister

ASAHI (Page 12) (Full)
Evening, November 19, 2009

The Asahi Shimbun has reported that Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama had told U.S. President Barack Obama, "Trust me," during the recent Japan-U.S. summit. The Prime Minister said on Nov. 19: "That is a fact."

The Prime Minister also revealed that in response, President Obama said, "I trust you." The Prime Minister made the above comment in response to a question from the press corps in front of his official residential quarters.

He also explained his talks with Obama this way: "In Okinawa, there are such strong feelings (calling for relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station outside the prefecture). Under such circumstances, we want to reach a conclusion as soon as possible. So I said, 'Trust me,' and the President replied, 'I trust you.' I think we have a relationship of trust. This is not about specific details (such as where the air station should be relocated)."

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14) U.S. service member under questioning hints at his involvement in Okinawa hit-and-run incident, saying, "I want to apologize"

AKAHATA (Page 15) (Full)
November 20, 2009

It became clear on Nov. 19 that the 27-year-old staff sergeant, who has been questioned by the prefectural police on a voluntary basis in connection with the hit-and-run incident in Yomitan Village, Okinawa Prefecture, that killed Masakazu Hokama, 66, has hinted at his involvement in the incident. He said to a person involved in the investigation: "I might have run him over. I want to apologize to his family."

According to his lawyer, the staff sergeant drove near the scene around 4 a.m. on Nov. 7 and hit something. He initially said that he thought he had hit a tree because he got off the vehicle and checked the area but could not find anything on the road. But he has changed his thinking after learning during questioning by the prefectural police that blood and hair adhering to the vehicle seem to be Mr. Hokama's, according to the lawyer.

The U.S. service member has been detained in the U.S. Army's Torii Communications Station in the village. He responded to questioning by the prefectural police on a voluntary basis for three days from Nov. 11 but has been refusing to do so since Nov. 14, saying, "I will not cooperate." Strongly regarding the U.S. service member as the suspect, the prefectural police have continued requesting his appearance for questioning.

15) Japan-China defense ministerial talks set for Nov. 27

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
November 20, 2009

The Defense Ministry announced yesterday that Chinese National Defense Minister Liang Guanglie will visit Japan on Nov. 26. Liang

is expected to hold talks with Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa to exchange views on the defense policies of the two countries.

16) Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano: SDF dispatch to Iraq not unconstitutional

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
November 20, 2009

When asked by New Komeito member Kanae Yamamoto about the government's view on the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq at a House of Councillors Cabinet Committee session yesterday, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano responded by saying: "The current government's position is that (the SDF dispatch to Iraq) is not unconstitutional."

17) Prime Minister Hatoyama requests cooperation on hit-and-run incident

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
November 20, 2009

With regard to the fact that a U.S. service member suspected of involvement in a fatal hit-and-run incident in the town of Yomitan,

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Okinawa Prefecture, has been refusing to appear for police questioning, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said yesterday, "I have called on (U.S. military authorities) through the Okinawa prefectural police to deal with the incident properly," revealing that he was requesting through the prefectural police that the suspect appear for questioning. Hatoyama made this comment in response to questions from reporters at the Prime Minister's Official Residence.

18) Researchers' organizations oppose budget-request screening; substantial cuts will impair Japan's scientific development

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
November 20, 2009

The Government Revitalization Unit (GRU) has screened budgetary requests to identify wasteful spending. As a result, it has decided to abolish or substantively reduce the size of many projects in the science and technology field as well. In response to this, expert members of the government's Council for Science and Technology Policy on Nov. 19 released an emergency proposal, noting that a call for short-term cost-effectiveness does not sit well with science and technology, which should be advanced from the long-term viewpoint." The Council has eight expert members, including Takashi Shiraishi, vice president of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies.

Many other academic societies and researchers' organizations also called on the government to take a second look at its policy of screening budget requests. The development of the next-generation supercomputer is now likely to be suspended or subject to a measure close to suspension. Three organizations of scientists who conduct computational research, such as the Consortium for Computational Fundamental Science, on the same day called for the continuation of the project. Nine societies of biologists on the same day also sought a revision of the GRU decision to cut the budget for financing assistance for junior researchers, noting that the spending cut is an improper decision that will significantly impair the development of Japan's science and technology.

19) American Airlines vice president warns against Delta's capital assistance to JAL, noting, "The act infringes on the U.S. Anti-Monopoly Act."

NIKKEI (Page 9) (Full)
November 20, 2009

Theo Panagiotoulas, American Airlines vice president for Asia and the Pacific, on Nov. 19 held a press conference in Tokyo and warned against Delta Air Line's plan to offer capital assistance to Japan

Air Lines (JAL). He noted that in the event that JAL teams up with Delta Air Lines, their share of the Pacific route would account for over 60 percent, which could disqualify the company from obtaining antitrust immunity (ATI). JAL, which is now applying for financial assistance from the Enterprise Turnaround Initiative Corporation of Japan (ETIC), intends to choose its business partner, involving a capital tie-up, as early as before the end of the year. The tug-of-war between the two U.S. airlines is now heating up.

Panagiotoulias pointed out, "Being a member of the Oneworld alliance generates the effect of providing 500 million dollars or approximately 45 billion yen in annual revenues to JAL." He then

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added that if the governments of Japan and the U.S. sign an open skies agreement, another 100 million dollars or approximately 9 billion yen will be added to that amount. He thus stressed that if the cost of switching the alliances is taken into account, JAL would be able to obtain greater benefits from a tie-up if it teams up with American Airlines.

Referring to Delta Air Lines' capital assistance offer totaling 1.2 billion dollars to JAL, he said, "American Airlines is ready to extend a massive amount of capital assistance."

American Airlines is proposing capital assistance worth between 100-130 billion yen, teaming up with TPG, a U.S. investment fund.

20) In Japan-China foreign ministerial, no progress made on issue of gas fields but ministers agree on cooperation toward resuming Six-Party Talks

ASAHI (Page 4) (Slightly abridged)
November 20, 2009

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada held a meeting with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi at the Iikura Guest House in Tokyo last night. Focusing on U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth's planned visit to North Korea next month to hold U.S.-North Korea talks, they affirmed that they will cooperate in an effort to resume the Six-Party Talks and promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

On the issue of developing gas fields in the East China Sea, the governments of Japan and China agreed in June of last year to jointly develop the fields. But the Chinese government has begun to take a cautious stance in response to public opinion. Under this situation, working-level talks to turn the agreement into a treaty have yet to start. Okada urged his counterpart to swiftly launch talks, but Yang just said: "We are quickly looking into the specific timeframe."

The two foreign ministers also exchanged views on the 15th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15) to be held in Copenhagen in December. Okada stated: "The U.S. and China, which are the largest emitters of greenhouse gases, have major roles to play. I expect (China) will come up with an amazingly ambitious target." Yang replied: "I hope industrialized countries will make specific promises on their own initiative. China would like to extend cooperation while taking responsibility that is common with but slightly different (from that of the industrialized countries)."

The Japanese and Chinese foreign ministers exchanged their lists of new members of the New Japan-China Friendship Committee for the 21st Century designed for Japanese and Chinese experts to give advice to their governments on political, economic, culture and other issues.

Prior to the foreign ministerial talks, Yang called on House of Councillors President Satsuki Eda and revealed that the Chinese government is making arrangements for Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping, who is viewed as the most likely candidate to become the next president, to visit Japan in mid-December.

ROOS